

McNerney Bill Will Help Farmers Protect Against Losses Due to Federal Quarantines

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Washington, D.C. – Congressman Jerry McNerney (D-Stockton) introduced the Containing Risk, Offering Protection (CROP) Act to offer insurance to farmers who want to protect themselves from lost crops due to federal quarantines. It amends the Federal Crop Insurance Act to expand crop insurance plans to include coverage of losses of commodities due to federal quarantines.

“Too often, farmers have to destroy their crops or abandon a harvest due to federal quarantines, laying waste to a full year of hard work and investment. It is time that the farmers affected by these quarantines have the resources in place to protect their livelihoods,” said Rep. McNerney.

In the last several years, more than 100 federal quarantine zones have been established across America. In California alone, there were more than 25, with three in San Joaquin County. In September of 2011, a federal quarantine in the Stockton area cost farmers over \$1 million dollars.

The CROP Act, H.R. 6022, directs the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a better support system for farmers in quarantine zones. The CROP Act gives authority to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to help provide insurance to farmers interested in protecting against the risk of crop losses due to federal quarantines.

“For our local farmers, losing a year’s harvest can be devastating. In these tough economic times, farmers need to be able to deal with the challenges that come their way,” said Rep. McNerney. “A robust farming community is essential, especially in our region. Our farmers produce some of our nation’s most vital specialty crops and are a key component to our region’s economic stability.”

The CROP Act is cosponsored by Reps. Jim Costa and Dennis Cardoza, who join McNerney in standing up for the farmers of the region. It is also endorsed by the California Apple Commission, California Citrus Mutual, California Grape and tree Fruit League, and the Western Growers Association.

“Our members farm under the threat of crop quarantines that can devastate a family business. Under the current crop insurance statute, when a quarantine is placed on a growing region by a government agency in order to control pest and disease those events are not insurable,” said Tom Nassif, president and CEO of Western Growers. “We are grateful to Representative McNernery for introducing this much-needed legislation that would rectify this failing in the current statute and if adopted ensure that an adequate crop insurance product be readily available.”